

For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Anthony Hopkins, anthonyh@pccy.org
215-563-5848 x23 (w) or 484-433-7490 (c)

Students and Principals Share Their School Funding Worries with City Council *Children and Adults Need Tools for Their Schools*

PHILADELPHIA (June 4th, 2015) – Students and principals alike are worried about conditions in their schools. Today, students from Powel elementary school and The Workshop School joined 20 public school principals to call on City Council to provide \$105 million in new recurring funding for the Philadelphia School District.

Powel and Workshop School students delivered handmade worry bracelets to members of Council as a symbol of the worries they have for the upcoming school year. They also gave each Councilperson a paint set and a miniature tambourine as a symbol of the basic tools children need in their schools.

“It’s unbelievable that parents and students descend on City Hall year after year, hat in hand, begging for the basics,” said Gretchen Elise Walker, a parent of a child at Powel Elementary School. “Our children deserve a high-quality education and it’s up to our elected leaders to provide the means to make it happen.”

A group of Philadelphia public school principals testified before City Council that the school funding crisis impacts the daily lives of students because there are too few adults and too few resources available in their schools.

“As educators, our message is this: if you give us the resources, we will get better outcomes,” said Toni Damon, Principal of Dobbins Career and Technical High School.

Chris Lehmann, Principal of Science Leadership Academy added, “Dollars alone won’t fix everything, and there are no shortcuts in educating children, but dollars DO buy many of the things that each make up part of the solution: having enough teachers to offer a full academic program, individual supports and services, teacher training, time to evaluate teaching and instructional practice so we can make adjustments; materials and technology; art, music, recess, counselors and nurses.”

Education Voters of Pennsylvania and Public Citizens for Children and Youth organized Thursday’s day of action. Both organizations credit Council for stepping up in the past to provide new funding for schools, but note that this year is critically important to helping the District to begin restoring lost resources.

“Schools have suffered for far too long, it’s time to start putting meat back into our bare-bones schools,” said Susan Gobreski, executive director of Education Voters of Pennsylvania. “With adequate funding from City Council and the State Legislature, we can finally have well-maintained schools with enough staff and the core services and academic programs that our children deserve.”

###